

Look out Wasatch County, the Berserker's on the loose

By SONNI SCHWINN
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HEBER CITY — The upper Provo River flows amid the trees, forming a beautiful, serene setting behind Max Miller's mobile home, a mile east of Hailstone Junction in Wasatch County. But, for the past month, late at night, the quiet has been broken by screams and bright lights, as Jef Richard has directed a new movie, "Curse of the Berserker."

Several adventure movies have been filmed on Miller's property during the last few years, but this is the first horror film.

A berserker is not just an average guy who has gone mad. Richard, who wrote the script, said berserkers were vicious warriors whom the Vikings sent ashore to rip up, claw and devastate villagers. After their first wave, the Vikings went in and conquered the land.

He said the Vikings kept berserkers chained in cages, beginning when they were small children. They fed them raw meat and drugged them so that they grew into violent warriors.

Their uniforms of war were bear snouts and bearskin capes. According to legend, the Viking god Odin put a curse on the descendants of the Vikings, because of their cruelty, allowing the berserkers to haunt them until they were avenged.

The movie takes place in 1986 and the curse appears to still be in effect when six young, life-time friends go on a last camping trip together before pursuing their separate adult lives. Two of the three girls are brutally murdered and the evidence points to a berserker.

Bart, the Kodiak bear raised in the Heber Valley by Doug Seus, gets into the picture and becomes a suspect. And that's all Richard will tell about the suspenseful plot before it is released on Halloween.

The six campers are played by unknowns in their 20s who have worked hard to learn their craft and hope this film will make a difference in their careers. Two are Utah residents.

Valerie Sheldon studied acting in London and under Lee Strasberg in New York, her hometown. She has had small roles in soaps and appeared in "off, off,

off Broadway" productions, but this is her first major role.

Shannon Engemann graduated from Timpview High in Provo, and became Miss Provo in 1984. She has worked as a model in Salt Lake, Los Angeles, and in New York for Eileen Ford. Her father managed Marie Osmond.

Beth Toussaint has modeled in her hometown, San Francisco, and in Europe, and studied acting in Los Angeles. She has done numerous commercials and rock videos, and appeared in the movie "Forbidden Love."

Rodney Montague graduated from Bryant Junior High in Salt Lake, Payson High in Payson, and then from the University of Utah Theater Department in 1985. His experience has been mostly in musical theater at the university and he has appeared in Lagoon musicals for four seasons. He is a partner in JY Productions, making industrial videos, and a sales representative for KCGL Radio in Bountiful.

Joseph Alian Johnson studied at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York, and has appeared in several other horror films, as well as

the movie "Brigham," about the life of Brigham Young. He said horror films are fun to make, but that this one focuses on suspense rather than close-ups of blood and violence.

Although Greg Dawson holds a master's degree in business from the University of Southern California, his dream is a career in show business. He is a singer and songwriter, and has appeared in summer stock. In fact, he was inspired to write a song about losing his love at the Mt. Air Cafe, while eating breakfast in a restaurant of that name in Park City.

A Salt Lake couple, Oscar and Beverly Roland, also appear in the film. Beverly is probably best known to local viewers as "Super Shopper" in a local furniture store TV commercial.

Richard lives in Marion, and has directed many films, including the "Grizzly Adams" TV series. He said although this is a low-budget film, about \$100,000 is being spent in Wasatch and Summit Counties. He said there are a lot of talented film people in the area and he hires locals as often as possible.

Lee and Suzanne Rowser were born and raised in Utah. Lee was born Aug. 1, in Salt Lake City. His family moved to Fillmore when he was 12; he then graduated from Millard High School. He enrolled in Southern Utah State College at Cedar City, where he received his B.S. degree in Accounting. It was while attending college that he met Suzanne Sorensen. They were married June 26, 1968 in the Manti Temple.

Suzanne was born April 20, in Delta. She graduated from Delta High School.

Following Lee's graduation from college, he began working as controller for Doty-Dayton Productions, a movie company that filmed and distributed such movies as: Where The Red Fern Grows and Seven Alone. At this time Lee, Suzanne, and their first two sons, Brent and Brian, moved to California.

They remained in California for 6½ years. Brad and Brandon were born during this time.

In 1981, the opportunity came which enabled them to move back to Utah. Lee began working as an investment counselor in Bountiful. Here their fifth son, Bryce, was born. They lived in Bountiful for a year before moving to Heber where Lee is currently employed with Comworld Productions.

Lee's hobbies include hunting, fishing, and flying (he currently holds a commercial pilots license).

Suzanne enjoys reading, sewing, needlework, and playing the piano.

LEE Aug. 1
SUZANNE Apr. 20
BRENT Mar. 14, 1970
BRIAN June 9, 1974
BRAD Mar. 22, 1978
BRANDON Nov. 6, 1979
BRYCE Feb. 11, 1982

